

THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

This bulletin is published for readers at home and abroad by the Religious Division of the Ministry of Information, London, to elucidate the spiritual issues at stake in the war, and to provide information concerning the British Churches in wartime, as well as their contribution to post-war reconstruction.

Number 284

April 19th, 1945

THE CHURCHES AND PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

The grief with which the whole country has been stricken by the sudden death of President Roosevelt has been felt with particular force in the Christian communities of the United Kingdom.

On Tuesday, April 17th, a memorable service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral in honour of the late President's memory. It was attended by the King and Queen and Princess Elizabeth, who were welcomed to the City by the Lord Mayor, and received by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's and by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Among the great congregation were several monarchs of the United Nations, Mr. Winston Churchill, and representatives of every aspect of the national life. Among the hymns sung were "Fight the Good Fight," which was sung at the famous church parade during the Atlantic Charter meeting, and the "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

In addition to the great service in St. Paul's Cathedral commemorative prayers were said in churches of every denomination on Sunday last. The Churches remember the strong spiritual leadership which has come from President Roosevelt throughout the course of this war, his affirmations of the importance of religious freedom and the strong support he brought to the Christian cause by his personal life and example, and by his sympathetic understanding of the responsibilities of Christian leaders. Christians in Britain remembered the personal letter which President Roosevelt sent to Archbishop William Temple by the hand of the American Bishops who visited the Church of England last autumn. The spirit in which the news of President Roosevelt's death has been received has been that of grief for his loss, thankfulness

for his leadership, and a deepening sense of responsibility as statesmen approach the problems of the peace without the benefit of the late President's wisdom and counsel.

ENTHRONEMENT OF THE ARCH-BISHOP OF CANTERBURY

The enthronement of the Most Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Fisher as Archbishop of Canterbury takes place on the day when this bulletin is published. As we go to Press distinguished visitors are arriving from other countries to be present at the great ceremony. We hope in our next week's issue to report it fully.

BISHOP FJELLBUS SERMON AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

We are pleased to be able to print the full text of the sermon preached by Dr. Arne Fjellbu, Bishop of Hålogaland (including the liberated part of North Norway), at the Intercession Service for the Nations and Churches of Norway and Denmark at Westminster Abbey on April 9th, 1945.

The Bishop took as his text Phil., 3, 13-14:

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching into those things which are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

"Before I begin my sermon," he said, "on this day of bitter and painful memories for Norway and Denmark, I feel impelled to tender our thanks to the Lord Dean of Westminster, and through him to the Church of England, for the kindness and friendship they have shown to us by inviting us on this

Distributed by

BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES

An Agency of The British Government

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day to hold a commemorative service in England's national sanctuary, Westminster Abbey.

"A national sanctuary stands like a symbol of unity between the State and the Church, a unity the deep sense of which a nation feels most strongly in times of distress and grief. As I stand here to-day in England's national sanctuary, in this holy place, filled with England's history, I also feel a call to convey our joint thanks to the British people, to every one of them from the common man and woman to the leaders of the nation, who, grim and patient, have fought their heroic fight for our common cause. We felt particularly bound to the British people during that sinister period when Great Britain stood before the terrible menace of invasion and fought with blood, sweat and tears, believing in hope against hope.

"During these long and terrible war years, during these fateful moments of history, we have in a wonderful way been tied to our Allies, not only in our fight *against* our common enemy, but also *for* the priceless and fundamental spiritual values, for all that constitutes our Christian civilization. My grateful thoughts, therefore, go to our other Allies. I mention the United States with its mighty and ever-growing effort. I feel grateful for all that is being prepared by so many, officially and privately, to help us when the war is over and our countries will lie there harried and plundered. Jesus says: 'Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.' With love and care can the chill which injustice has spread in our countries be conquered.

"I mention the Soviet Union whose task it became to free the first piece of Norwegian soil and whose leaders and people have shown such a deep respect for our national and religious traditions and modes of thought.

"I also feel a deep need to mention France which was so cruelly stricken, which has suffered so terribly and which now rises again under great difficulties, but with new vigour, and makes a great effort in our common struggle.

"And as I now pass to remember what Denmark and Norway have gone through and how they have fought since April 9th, 1940, I must also mention the other occupied countries, some of which have had to suffer even more cruelly than our Nordic countries. Without forgetting anybody, I am sure we all agree that in these days our thoughts go out to and our prayers include, particularly, the Dutch nation who are in direst plight, who must wait in the valley of the shadow

of death, in the deepest darkness before the light returns and the new day dawns.

"Two peoples are united in commemorating a common experience—the Norwegian and the Danish peoples. After April 9th we have become sister nations as never before. From that day we learnt something which does not often happen in history. Paul says to the Romans: 'Be kindly affectioned one to another; in honour preferring one another.' Rarely do individuals and still more rarely do nations act in this way. But since April 9th, 1940, the Danish and the Norwegian peoples have followed this word of the Scripture. We have rejoiced in each other's fight against tyranny, in each other's courage. Therefore we have to-day the right jointly to stand forward in God's sight.

"The apostle says: 'Forgetting those things which are behind.' Have we not come together to-day to commemorate those things which are behind? In fact, not all that lies behind ought to be forgotten. We shall not forget those who lost their lives, who were executed because they obeyed their conscience, those whose graves became that of the unknown soldier fighting as they did to liberate their country. Their memory is dear and sacred to us. Out of their death a new Norway grows up and we shall not forget that 'whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.' Sin must be punished, criminals against our people and our land shall know what they have done, because it must be put on record that what happened on April 9th must never happen again, and because the sense of justice and morality of a nation must not be outraged.

"We must not get stuck in the past but must 'reach forth into those things which are before.' We must build the new Norway, the new Denmark. We must, therefore, not let ourselves be influenced by the negative, by revenge and hatred, but by the positive, by all the tasks that lie before us in a future which attracts us but which will be full of difficulties. We must forget inner strife and press forward to maintain the unity which the war has given us. Beware of letting peace divide what the war has united! The most important problem of the post-war years will be moral reconstruction. Replacement of destroyed material goods is easier than moral reconstruction. We must not forget what lies behind the spiritual fight we have conducted for justice and truth, freedom and love. That is the mark for the prize we all must press towards if we are to be able to rebuild our land. Before us lies the prize of victory in Jesus Christ. We shall

win this prize through Christ's Cross which condemns all sin but which means hope for every sinner. With righteousness and reconciliation our lands may be rebuilt and peace be restored. If Christian faith and Christian morals are not allowed to determine the prize for which we are pressing forward, and to give us the force to reach it, our nations and the whole world will be damned into hell even if the war is won."

SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

In view of the momentous character of the decisions to be made at San Francisco, the Executive Committee of the Council of Christians and Jews, which is representative of all sections of Christian and Jewish opinion in this country, and which has as its main object the combating of religious and racial intolerance by the promotion of understanding and goodwill between Christians and Jews, desires to submit the following considerations to His Majesty's Government:

"The Council is deeply concerned that effective safeguards be instituted against policies of discrimination and acts of wholesale persecution against any community on grounds of religion, race or nationality, such as the persecution of Jews and other minorities under the Nazi regime.

"The Council, however, recognizes that the fate of religious and racial minorities depends ultimately upon the measure of respect for human rights and dignities felt by the peoples of the world, and that this, in turn, depends upon the establishment and maintenance of national and international standards and practices based upon respect for these human rights.

"The Council, therefore, welcomes the intention expressed in the Statement of Tentative Proposals issuing from the Dumbarton Oaks Conversations on World Organization, to establish an Economic and Social Council which, amongst its other subjects, 'shall promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms'; and urges that this essential matter be given prominence in the deliberations of the San Francisco Conference, so that adequate provision may be made, under the proposed new organization, for the focussing of world opinion upon threats to the well-being of any human group.

"The Council of Christians and Jews would welcome the formulation in a Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms of the principles involved in the carrying out of these proposals."

On the eve of the San Francisco Conference, Tuesday, April 24th, at 5.30 p.m., a Public Service of Intercession for World Recovery, arranged by the British Council of Churches, will be held in St. Paul's Cathedral. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council will take part in the Service. The Preacher will be the Dean of St. Paul's. A collection will be taken for Christian Reconstruction in Europe.

FARM SUNDAY

The Church authorities have announced that Rogation Sunday, which falls this year on May 6th, is again to be observed as Farm Sunday. Rogation Sunday shares with Plough Sunday, Lammastide and Harvest Festival the distinction of being one of the four agricultural festivals of the Church calendar.

The Minister of Agriculture has asked his County War Agricultural Executive Committees and their District Committees to arrange, so far as practicable, suitable processions and gatherings on the day, preferably in association with Church services and in co-operation with the Church authorities of all creeds, the local branches of the National Farmers' Union and Farm Workers' Unions, the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs, the Women's Land Army, the National Federation of Women's Institutes and other organizations. The Minister hopes that all who are able will participate in local celebrations of this kind.

This year, the secular observances will be specially appropriate in view of the world food shortage, and the Minister's urgent call for volunteers for the harvest and other land work so that the nation's food for next winter may be assured.

(Ministry of Agriculture.)

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TO POST-WAR GERMANY

As an indication of contemporary thinking on the above subject, we quote from an article in the Church of England Newspaper (April 6th, 1945), by Canon T. Guy Rogers, M.C., B.D., Rector of Birmingham:

"There is no difficulty in creating a Christian attitude to Greece or Holland or Belgium or Norway, or the rest of the countries devastated by Nazi oppression. We may find our economic resources so impoverished that we can do comparatively little to help,

but there is no prejudice as in the case of Germany; nor is there much so long as we think of Germany in terms of Europe as a whole. For example, the Churches in this country are preparing to take their part in rehabilitating the Church life on the Continent. We hope to raise a quarter of a million of money in the Church of England alone to help to restore the institutional life of the persecuted and impoverished Churches of the Continent. Even though the Confessional Church in Germany may be included, prejudice will still be slight.

"But we must also face our 'isolated' relations with Germany as the aggressor and guilty nation whose country we propose to occupy in our own interests and in the general interests of the world. Can we speak of this occupation as in any way Christian? Can we make it more so by any efforts of the Christian Church? Can we so influence our own country that the manner and method and purpose of the occupation can be more clearly related to Christian ends?

"Here, again, we must be careful not to pronounce too readily on matters on which sound military and political judgment may be better informed than our own. Fraternization may mislead and deceive the German people. It might obscure certain moral aspects of the situation. It might be well if we checked hasty protests or criticisms on this score, watching rather that decency, justice and politeness accompanied the sterner measures of the occupation and leave it at that for the present. But I have some suggestions to make which begin further back in the realm of thought and feeling.

"1. We should try to think of this occupation in terms of trusteeship. We are occupying Germany as a trustee for the Germany which is one day to be readmitted to the comity of nations. The suffering which Germany has brought upon herself can only be gradually alleviated, and this generation of Germans will bear some of the economic, political and cultural marks of it to their dying day, but the children have to be taken care of and educated, German home life must be restored and sufficient hope of a better and happier Germany preserved in order to defeat anarchy and stimulate constructive effort.

"I notice that even the Russians who have suffered so terribly at the hands of the Germans, and whose occupation of Germany is liable to be more severe than our own, carefully distinguish between their attitude to adults and children. It is in our common attitude to the children that hopes of a common policy depend. They will soon be growing up and this fact should help in the development of an attitude of trusteeship to Germany as a whole which it is the privilege of Christians to urge from the start.

"2. We should continually concentrate attention on securing people of not only intellectual calibre but of integrity and Christian character to administer the machinery of government in occupied Germany. There are, of course, high hopes that Christian voluntary organizations such as the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., which are international in character, will be able to play some part in the rehabilitation of social and religious life in Germany; but we often forget that it is through Government administration and Government officials that the greater opportunities are provided for Christian people seeking to be of service. U.N.R.R.A., for example, should be regarded as more than a possible sphere for Christian action, and the importance of choosing the right people for administering affairs in Germany should be constantly impressed on the Government by the Christian Church. Within the framework of the rules and regulations laid down for administration there will be room for the exercise of personality. It is our business to see that such personality neither increases the harshness nor adds to the suffering of the situation. Wisdom with firmness, compassion with justice, can and ought to exist together and to coalesce in the work of administration.

"3. Finally, there is one issue on which, though it may seem to outsiders to be controversial, the Christian Church is entitled to unite in a common policy. When it comes to clothing the naked and feeding the hungry we get down to rock-bottom Christian principles which transcend the relations of enemy and friend and demand Christian expression in relation to post-war Germany."